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DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

Committee on Imagery Requirements and Exploitation

Washington, DC 20505

19 February 1985

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence
Deputy Director of Central Intelligence

THROUGH: Director, Intelligence Community Staff
Deputy Director, Intelligence Community

SUBJECT: Reconnaissance Flights (U)

26 FEB 1985

1. This memo responds to your request for information on reconnaissance flights. I have attached a short paper describing current management of airborne reconnaissance which addresses your points of interest - mission authorization, costs, and intelligence yield. (U)

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ice for Improvement in

eventually could lead to Cuban
is from Angola.

would give no specific figures on
military presence in Africa. U.S.
put the current force in Ethiopia
5,000, down from a peak of

It is estimated that there are
Cuban combat soldiers in Angola.

the early 1970s, Castro regularly
ed visits to Cuba of U.S. congress-
other officials and journalists as a
means of sending messages to Washington
across the wide political breach separating
the two countries. Such contacts have less-
ened, both in frequency and impact, under
the Reagan administration, which consis-
tently has blamed Cuba as the "source" of
conflict in Central America. In its early days
the administration contemplated imposing
measures ranging from a naval quarantine
to a direct military action against the island.

But since the immigration agreement
was concluded Dec. 14, Castro has played
host to a delegation of U.S. Catholic bishops
and has been visited by three U.S. Con-
gressmen accompanied by several scientists
and businessmen.

The congressional delegation, including
Rep. Mickey Leland (D-Texas) and Jim
Leach (R-Iowa) and headed by Rep. Bill Al-
exander (D-Ark.), carried Castro's message
to Washington. Alexander later said that in
a meeting the day after their return Jan. 17
he told Defense Secretary Caspar W. Wein-
berger that "Castro wants to normalize re-
lations with the United States, period."

"He's waiting for someone to talk to. He's
standing there like a bridesmaid," said Al-
exander, who is chief deputy majority whip
in the House and a vocal critic of the Rea-
gan administration's policies in Central
America.

After questioning whether Castro can be
trusted, Weinberger "promised to bring it
up with the president and with [Secretary of
State George P.] Shultz," Alexander said in
a telephone conversation in Washington.

At the end of the lengthy interview
Wednesday in his office in the Palace
of the Revolution, Castro emphasized
that "nothing I have said here was
intended to be hostile toward the United
States." He had noted throughout that Cuba
had observed favorably both the substance
and the tone of the recent immigration ne-
gotiations, which he characterized as "ex-
cellent. Very serious and respectful."

The talks themselves were a long time
starting and followed a diplomatic offer
made by the Reagan administration last
March and a June visit to Havana by then-
Democratic presidential candidate Jesse
Jackson, who helped persuade Castro to
accept the offer.

Although discussions between the two
governments began in New York in July,
they were suspended without public expla-
nation in August because of what Castro
said in last week's interview was an "absol-
utely unnecessary" flight of a U.S. high-fly-
ing SR71 spy plane over Cuban territory.

According to Castro and other Cuban of-
ficials, while the United States frequently
flies such aircraft around the island, it rare-
ly penetrates Cuban air space. The alleged
August overflight was the first since late
1963, they said, and was viewed as "provoc-
ative" while the immigration talks were un-
derway.

"Practically all the data the United States
wants to get about Cuba they can get
through the satellites—even the slightest
details—and through the flights around Cu-
ba," Castro said. "We didn't want to bring a
scandal about this. We wrote a protest note

about it." According to the Cubans, the
United States provided a satisfactory an-
swer indicating the flight was unrelated to
the negotiations.

The Defense Department declined to re-
spond last week to a Washington Post in-
quiry about the incident, noting that as a
matter of policy it "does not comment on
reconnaissance flights."

In general, Castro said, the Reagan ad-
ministration had stepped up military maneu-
vers off its coast and at the U.S. naval base
at Guantanamo on the eastern tip of Cuba
and greatly increased aerial surveillance of
the island nation. Other Cuban officials said
that flights in international air space around
Cuba by the SR71 planes had increased
from eight during the Carter administration
to 120 during the first four years of the
Reagan presidency. Flights directly over
Cuba, they said, had decreased from five
during Carter's term to four since Reagan
became president.

In a list of what he called "hostile" acts by
the administration, Castro also included "in-
tensified economic measures, the economic
blockade," and the exertion of "great pres-
sure to obstruct the rescheduling of Cuba's
external debt" with the West.

"In the political field, it also has been very
aggressive," he said, "and in the military
field, it has constantly threatened us. All
that is true. But nevertheless, we are grate-
ful. I'm speaking seriously, we are very
grateful."

"Why? Because it forced us to undertake
two big revolutions." One, he said,
amounted to a rethinking of Cuba's econom-
ic structure that has resulted in an ongoing
austerity drive, an emphasis on import sub-
stitution, and the fulfillment of trade com-
mitments with the Soviet Bloc.

More importantly, Castro said, "during
the past four years, in view of the threat of
the United States, we have totally changed
our conceptions regarding defense. We
have multiplied our forces by many times,
to the point that we have become an uncon-
querable country. Invulnerable, unoccu-
piable."

Included among the new defense mea-
sures is what has amounted to the reestab-
lishment of a nationwide militia that has
trained and armed hundreds of thousands of
Cubans along the lines of the force that ex-
isted following the Bay of Pigs invasion in
1961. "Every citizen in this country knows
what to do," Castro said, "in the event of a
blockade, a war of attrition, bombings, an
invasion, even in case of an occupation of
the national territory."

"It would be very costly for us, and it's
not a test we would like to go through. But
it would be very costly for the aggressors,
and it would be a cost they could not
bear. . . . We know this, and the U.S. ex-
perts in matters of war know this as well."

But in a lengthy monologue that chron-
icled rising debt, unemployment and social
pressures in the Third World, particularly
in Latin America, Castro indicated his belief
that time is working toward dialogue and
against what he characterized as an inter-
ventionist U.S. policy in the hemisphere. He
said the Latin Americans, long separated by
an "every man for himself" attitude, are
starting to see joint efforts as the only so-
lution.

"Latin America is a powder keg," he said.
"It's an explosive situation. It's a serious
thing, and how are they going to solve it?
It's better that we start thinking about all of
these problems."

"I believe that the United States has to
think in the longer term, and elaborate con-

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